

In the Claims:

Please amend the claims, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An optical ~~Optical-system (10; 20)~~ for a charged particle multi-beam system, comprising:

an electrostatic lens component for a plurality of charged particle beams having ~~(12) comprising~~ at least two electrostatic sub-lenses; and

a magnetic lens component for a plurality of charged particle beams having ~~comprising~~ at least two magnetic sub-lenses, wherein ~~whereby~~ the sub-lenses share a common excitation coil (15);

wherein the electrostatic and the magnetic lens component form ~~forming~~ a multi-lens for a plurality of charged particle beams having ~~comprising~~ at least two sub-lenses; and

wherein each sub-lens comprises ~~comprising~~ an opening (14) for a charged particle beam~~[[;]]~~ and each sub-lens is adapted to focus a charged particle beam.

2. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, wherein~~ according to any of the preceding claims, whereby each of the at least two electrostatic sub-lenses comprises at least one or more electrodes ~~electrode (18), the electrodes of the~~ at least two electrostatic sub-lenses being on a common potential.

3. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, wherein~~ according to any of the preceding claims, whereby each of the at least two electrostatic sub-lenses comprises one or more at least a first and a second electrodes ~~electrode (18, 19).~~

4. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 3, wherein~~ according to any of the preceding claims, whereby the first electrodes of the at least two electrostatic sub-lenses are on a common potential and the second electrodes of the at least two electrostatic sub-lenses are on a common potential.

5. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, wherein according to any of the preceding claims, whereby~~ the electrostatic lens component for the ~~a plurality of~~ charged particle beams is an immersion lens component for the ~~a plurality of~~ charged particle beams.
6. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, wherein according to any of the preceding claims, whereby~~ the electrostatic lens component for the ~~a plurality of~~ charged particle beams is a retarding lens component for the ~~a plurality of~~ charged particle beams.
7. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system (40; 20) of claim 1, wherein according to any of the preceding claims, whereby~~ the magnetic sub-lenses are radial-gap lenses.
8. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, wherein according to any of claims 1 to 6, whereby~~ the magnetic sub-lenses are axial-gap lenses.
9. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, wherein according to any of claims 1 to 6, whereby~~ the magnetic sub-lenses are radial-axial-gap lenses.
10. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, wherein according to any of the preceding claims, whereby~~ a lens field area of the electrostatic sub-lens is below a lens field area of the respective magnetic sub-lens.
11. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, wherein according to any of claims 1 to 9, whereby~~ a lens field area of the electrostatic sub-lens is above a lens field area of the respective magnetic sub-lens.
12. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, wherein according to any of claims 1 to 9, whereby~~ a lens field area of the electrostatic sub-lens and a respective lens field area of the magnetic sub-lens overlap.

13. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, wherein according to any of the preceding claims, whereby one electrode (18, 19) of each of the at least two electrostatic sub-lenses is on a beam boost potential.~~

14. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, further (10; 20) according to any of the preceding claims, comprising means (102; 112) for fine focusing.~~

15. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, further according to any of the preceding claims, comprising an extraction electrode (122) component with an extraction electrode for each of the at least two charged particle beams.~~

16. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, further according to any of the preceding claims, comprising a scan deflection unit (144, 146; 152).~~

17. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, further according to any of the preceding claims, comprising an individual scan deflection unit for each of the at least two charged particle beams.~~

18. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 16, wherein according to any of claims 16 to 17, whereby the scan deflection unit is an in-lens scan deflection unit (152).~~

19. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of claim 1, further according to any of the preceding claims, comprising a detection unit (162, 174).~~

20. (Currently Amended) The optical ~~Optical-system of~~ according to claim 19, wherein, ~~whereby the detection unit comprises a spectrometer.~~

21. (Currently Amended) A method ~~Method~~ for focusing at least two charged particle beams on a specimen, comprising the steps of:
providing an optical system comprising: with

an electrostatic lens component for a plurality of charged particle beams
~~having comprising~~ at least two electrostatic sub-lenses;[[, and]]

a magnetic lens component for a plurality of charged particle beams
~~having comprising~~ at least two magnetic sub-lenses;[[,]] and

at least two separate openings for each of the at least two charged
particle beams traveling through the optical system;[[, and]]

controlling a current for an excitation coil of the magnetic lens component,
thereby focusing the at least two electron beams; and

controlling at least two potentials of the electrostatic lens component, thereby
focusing the at least two electron beams[[;]].

22. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~Method according to claim 21, wherein~~
~~whereby each of the electrostatic sub-lenses is provided with one or more at least a first~~
and a second electrodes ~~electrode~~.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22, further comprising ~~Method~~
~~according to any of claims 21 to 22, controlling the first electrodes or the second~~
electrodes separately for each of the at least two electrostatic sub-lenses.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 21, ~~Method according to any of~~
~~claims 21 to 23, further controlling focusing properties correction means.~~

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 21, ~~Method according to any of~~
~~claims 21 to 24, further scanning the at least two charged particle beams over an area~~
of the specimen.

26. (Currently Amended) A multiple ~~Multiple~~ charged particle beam device,
comprising:

a charged particle beam source-(102);

a detector for detecting secondary particles-(162);

beam shaping means-(A);

a housing (194) for the charged particle beam column, wherein ~~whereby~~ the

housing can be evacuated;

at least one optical system comprising: (20; 180) ~~according to any of claims 1 to~~

20,

an electrostatic lens component for a plurality of charged particle beams having at least two electrostatic sub-lenses; and

a magnetic lens component for a plurality of charged particle beams having at least two magnetic sub-lenses, wherein the sub-lenses share a common excitation coil;

wherein the electrostatic and the magnetic lens component form a multi-lens for a plurality of charged particle beams having at least two sub-lenses;

wherein each sub-lens comprises an opening for a charged particle beam;

and

wherein each sub-lens is adapted to focus a charged particle beam; and
at least one control unit ~~(7, 8, 9)~~ for the at least one optical system.

27. (Currently Amended) The multiple ~~Multiple~~-charged particle beam device ~~(190)~~ ~~according to~~ of claim 26, further comprising a deflection unit ~~(172a, 172b)~~ for directing the charged particle beam away from the optical axis ~~(11)~~ and redirecting the charged particle beam.

28. (Currently Amended) The multiple ~~Multiple~~-charged particle beam device of claim 27, wherein the deflection unit comprises at least two magnetic deflectors. ~~(172a, 172b).~~